

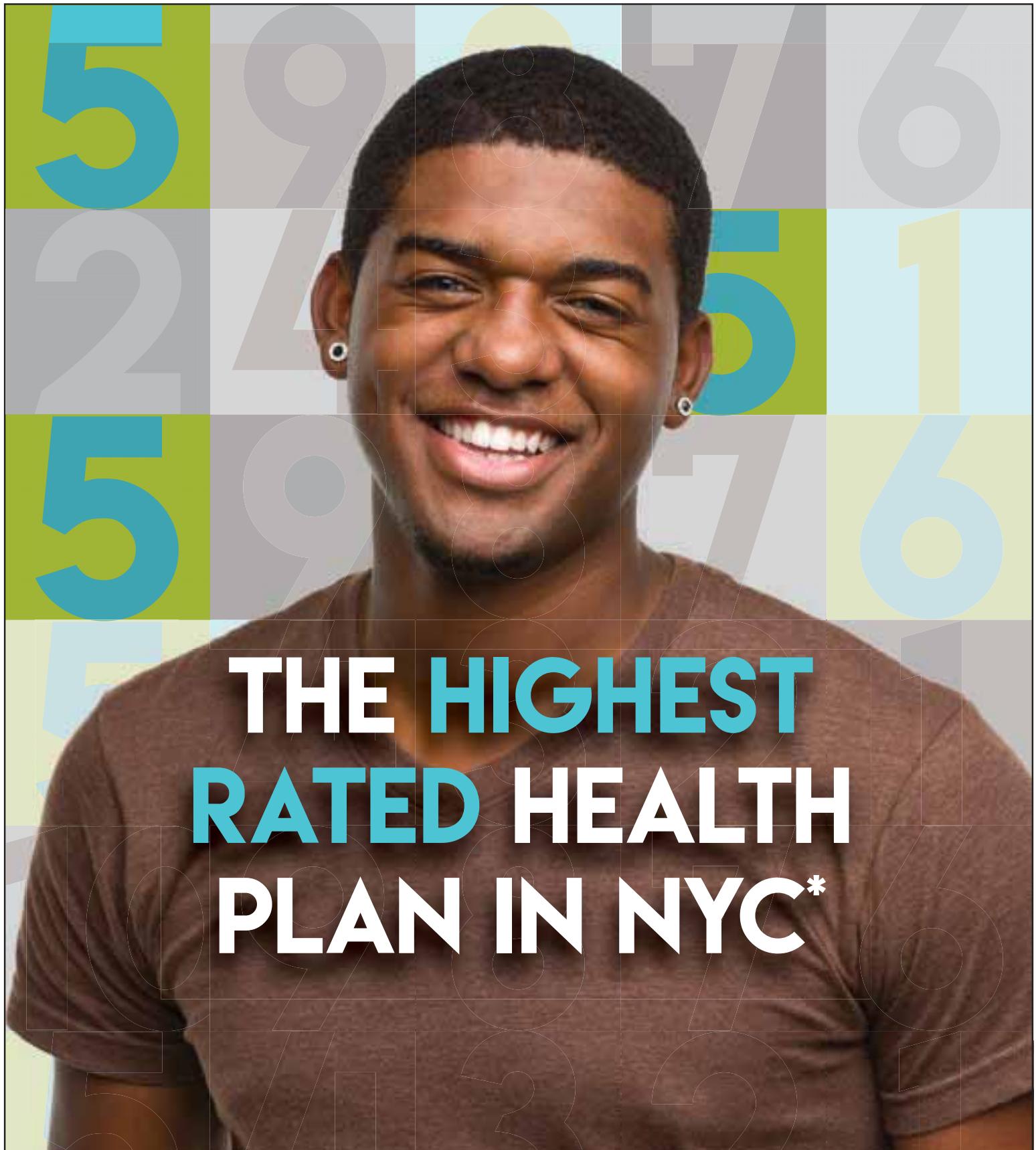


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# met

NEW YORK CITY NO. 1 FREE PAPER

Wednesday, January 23, 2019 metro.us | t: Metro



Who are this year's  
Oscar nominees? 10-11

ISTOCK

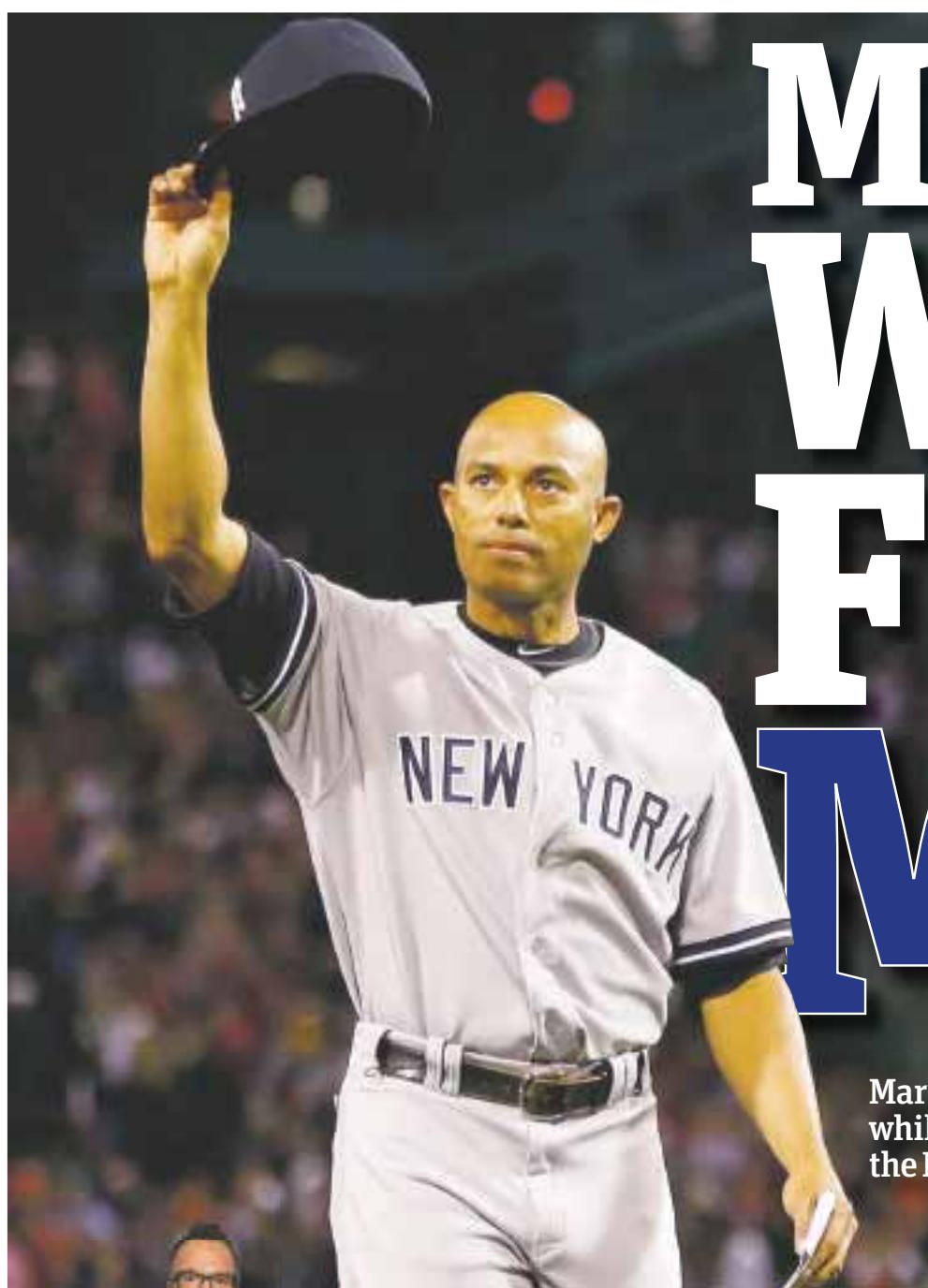
## LUCAS BROS

Catching up with the comedy  
twins as they hit the road. 15



Meet the stars of Comedy Central's  
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# MAKE WAY FOR MO



Mariano Rivera sets an MLB record  
while gaining enshrinement into  
the Baseball Hall of Fame. 20

GETTY IMAGES



Tom Arnold talks new film, Trump and more. 17

GETTY IMAGES

## THINGS TO KNOW



JOE PANTORNO, SPORTS EDITOR

There was little question that Mariano Rivera was going to punch his ticket to the Hall of Fame this year, his first on the ballot. After all, the Yankees legend is the greatest closer in Major League Baseball history. The one question that remained was if he would break the record for voting percentage, as he could be the first player ever to be unanimously voted to Cooperstown. How did he fare? Head inside to find out.

## WELCOME TO METRO.US

## RONALDO ACCEPTS FINE FOR TAX EVASION, NO JAIL

**I** Portuguese soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo was fined almost 19 million euros (\$21.6 million) for tax fraud on Tuesday but will avoid serving a 23-month prison sentence after agreeing to a deal. Ronaldo, holding hands with his Spanish fiancee Georgina Rodriguez, came out of the courtroom smiling, pausing to sign autographs before leaving in a black van. The 33-year-old Juventus forward, who played for Real Madrid from 2009-18, agreed to settle the case by paying an 18.8 million euro fine and accepting a suspended jail sentence. Under Spanish law, a first offender can

serve anything less than a two-year sentence under probation and Ronaldo will not have to go to prison. His court appearance lasted about 15 minutes as the five-time world footballer of the year only needed to sign off on the previously settled agreement. The trial of Ronaldo's former Real Madrid teammate Xabi Alonso, also in court on Tuesday over accusations of tax fraud, was suspended, a court magistrate said. Prosecutors were seeking a five-year jail sentence and a fine of 4 million euros for Spaniard Alonso, who retired as a player in 2017.

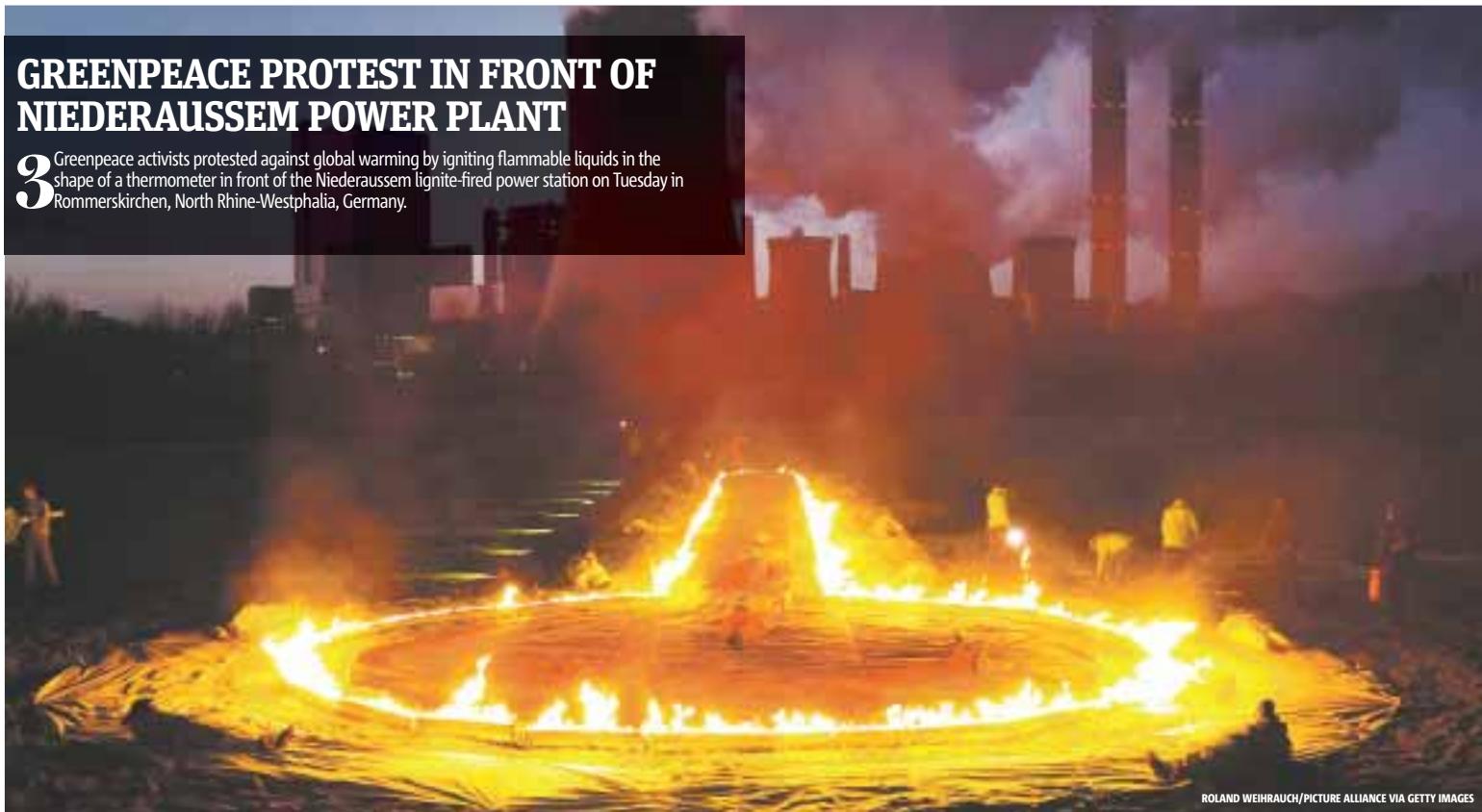
## DRONE SIGHTINGS HALT AIR TRAFFIC INTO NEWARK

**2** Reports of drone sightings in northern New Jersey temporarily halted arrivals at Newark Liberty International Airport on Tuesday, the Federal Aviation Administration said. A spokesman from the FAA said flights into Newark — the 11th busiest U.S. airport — were briefly suspended after two drones were seen flying at 3,500 feet over nearby Teterboro Airport, a small regional airport about 17 miles away that mostly handles corporate jets and private planes. The federal agency said information about the drone sightings was turned

over to law enforcement. The FAA's Air Traffic Control System Command Center briefly issued a ground stop at Newark citing "drone activity," according to a document posted on its website. The FAA said there is still a ground stop for some flights arriving into Newark in order to clear the backlog of flights that were delayed arriving into Newark due to the drone sightings. United Airlines, the largest carrier at Newark, said later on Tuesday that it was aware of the reports of drone activity, but the "impact to our operations has been minimal so far."

## GREENPEACE PROTEST IN FRONT OF NIEDERAUSSEM POWER PLANT

**3** Greenpeace activists protested against global warming by igniting flammable liquids in the shape of a thermometer in front of the Niederaussem lignite-fired power station on Tuesday in Rommerskirchen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.



ROLAND WEIHRUCH/PICTURE ALLIANCE VIA GETTY IMAGES

## FOUR CHARGED IN NEW YORK MUSLIM BOMB PLOT

**4** Three men and a teenager have been arrested after planning to bomb a Muslim community in upstate New York, and investigators have recovered three homemade bombs and nearly two dozen guns, authorities said on Tuesday. The alleged plot was uncovered after a student at Odyssey Academy, a school in Greece, New York, showed a classmate a photograph of another student and said, "He looks like the next school shooter, doesn't he?" Greece Police Chief Patrick Phelan told reporters at a news conference. The remark was reported to school security,

which along with local police interviewed both the student who had the photograph as well as the student in the picture. The investigation eventually led police to execute several search warrants and arrest four people, including the student who showed off the photograph. The group had planned to attack Islamberg, a small enclave in the Catskill Mountains about 150 miles northwest of New York City. The town was founded more than three decades ago by a group of black Muslims who follow the teachings of Pakistani Sufi cleric Mubarik Ali Shah Gilani.

## EX-'CHAPO' CHIEF TALKED KILLING COP AS FAVOR

**5** A former top lieutenant to accused Mexican drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman on Tuesday said he and his former boss once discussed killing a police officer as a favor to a local politician. Darnaso Lopez Nunez, testifying against Guzman in federal court in Brooklyn, New York, walked jurors through a BlackBerry message exchange from September 2013 in which he said he told Guzman that the mayor of La Paz in 2013 was Esthela Ponce Beltran, who could not immediately be reached for comment. Guzman, 61, who was extradited to the United States in 2017, has been on trial since November on charges of trafficking cocaine, heroin and other drugs into the country as leader of the Sinaloa cartel, one of the world's largest drug trafficking organizations.

"favor," because she was a favorite for a state-level office in an upcoming election. He said they should make the hit look like "revenge from some gangbanger." Lopez did not say whether the murder took place. The mayor of La Paz in 2013 was Esthela Ponce Beltran, who could not immediately be reached for comment. Guzman, 61, who was extradited to the United States in 2017, has been on trial since November on charges of trafficking cocaine, heroin and other drugs into the country as leader of the Sinaloa cartel, one of the world's largest drug trafficking organizations.

## STATS

THE ECONOMIST

## 'BURGERNOMICS': THE PRICE OF A BIG MAC

Price of a Big Mac in selected countries (in U.S. dollars).



## NEWS



GETTY IMAGES

Nonprofit World Central Kitchen serves food to federal workers.

Trump may have lost the Dreamer issue as a top bargaining point.

The U.S. Senate shifted slightly closer on Tuesday to resolving a month-long partial government shutdown, but there was no sign of relief anytime soon for 800,000 federal workers who are furloughed or working without pay.

Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell laid the groundwork for a vote on Thursday on a Democratic proposal to fund the government for three weeks, without attaching the \$5.7 billion in U.S.-Mexico border wall funding demanded by President Donald Trump. The president has opposed similar legislation in the House of Representatives.

McConnell had said previously he would not consider a funding bill that Trump would refuse to sign.

The Senate leader said he would also bring up for a Thursday vote a proposal by Trump to end the shutdown that includes border wall funding and relief for "Dreamers," people brought illegally to the United States as children. The plan was unlikely to pass in the Senate and had even less chance in the Democrat-led House of Representatives.

Democrats have said they would not trade a temporary restoration of the immigrants' protections from deportation in return for a permanent border wall they view as ineffective. In 2017, Trump moved to end the Dreamers' protections, triggering a court battle.

But the Senate action could set the stage for

the type of bipartisan negotiating that will be necessary to end a shutdown that began on Dec. 22. Americans have largely blamed Trump for the shutdown, now the longest in U.S. history.

Affected federal workers are struggling to make ends meet.

A Trump administration official said on Tuesday the president still intended to deliver his State of the Union speech on Jan. 29, even though House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the top U.S. Democrat, had recommended he delay it because of the shutdown.

The request seemed likely to set up another clash between Trump and Pelosi, days after Trump abruptly refused to let her use a U.S. military plane to go on an overseas trip hours before she was to depart.

Aides to Pelosi did not respond to requests for comment on whether Trump's invitation to speak would stand.

#### BARGAINING CHIP

Trump may have lost the Dreamer issue as his main negotiating point on Tuesday when the U.S. Supreme Court was silent, at least for now, on considering an administration appeal of lower-court rulings allowing continued temporary protections for the immigrant youths.

Instead, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program established by then-President Barack Obama in 2012 lives on with or without approval by Congress.

As the Senate debates Trump's proposal, House Democrats this week are pushing legislation that would end the partial shutdown of agencies including the departments of Justice, Homeland Security, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor and Interior. REUTERS

# Senate to vote on ending gov't shutdown, Trump wall impasse

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MTA passengers waiting at 34th St subway station.

ROMAN KRUGLOV/Flickr

# MTA increases speed limits for some subway lines



In an effort to make New York City subway trains faster, the MTA is increasing or even removing speed limits at locations throughout the track system.



KRISTIN TOUSSAINT  
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Has your commute felt any quicker lately? New York City subway trains have been speeding up, according to the MTA.

The MTA has increased speed limits at 24 subway stations in an effort to move straphangers through the system more swiftly.

Subway speeds have more than doubled at some spots, like City Hall station. Last week, workers bolted a new speed sign into place there, ramping up the R line from 6 miles per hour to 15 miles per hour.

Other parts of the R line in Brooklyn have increased from 15 to 30 miles per hour. On the 1 line north of Penn Station, officials have removed the speed limit entirely, allowing trains to run as fast as they can, compared to the previous limit of 18 miles per hour.

That 6 mph R train speed is a system-wide low, according to the MTA. Officials have been working to accelerate train speed limits under NYC Transit's Save Safe Seconds campaign.

These 24 subway stations to see faster speeds are just part of that effort. Since the summer of 2018, a safety committee approved speed limit increases at 68 locations, so the MTA has 44 more to go.

Officials plan to increase some New York City subway line speeds up to 45 mph, like on the C between Kingston

Throop Avenues and Utica Ave and the E/F line on the north end of Grand Avenue-Newtown.

NYC Transit has also identified about 320 inaccurate timer signals, out of about 2,000 throughout the system, and has so far recalibrated 59 of them.

Timer signals, or speed-regulating signals, trip a train's emergency brakes when it goes faster than the allowed speed limit.

This safety measure has been helpful at preventing accidents, according to the MTA, but has also caused subway delays. Faulty signals can cause New York City subway trains to slow down by forcing them to stop and go slower, even when the trains are already traveling at or under the allowed speed.

**"I have directed my team to identify and resolve every root cause of delay; in doing so, we can then implement the right fix, often for little or no cost."**

NYC Transit President

"I have directed my team to identify and resolve every root cause of delay; in doing so, we can then implement the right fix, often for little or no cost," said NYC Transit President Andy Byford in a statement.

The SPEED Unit, which tests the accuracy of these timer signals and also if areas of the system can handle higher subway speeds, will continue, he added, to examine "hundreds of miles of track to find areas where we can safely increase speeds."

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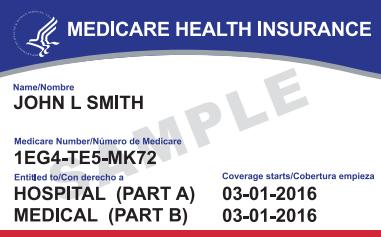
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# Activists protest 'The View' after Whoopi Goldberg's bike lane comments

Families for Safe Street is asking to appear on "The View" to discuss how to prevent traffic deaths.



KRISTIN TOUSSAINT  
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New Yorkers who have lost loved ones in traffic crashes gathered outside of the ABC building Tuesday morning to protest the recent comments by "The View" host Whoopi Goldberg criticizing New York City bike lanes.

Members of Families for Safe Streets, a group organized by Transportation Alternatives to shed light on those affected by traffic crashes, called on "The View" to bring them on-air to talk about how the city's Vision Zero efforts save lives.

Mayor Bill de Blasio

appeared on the morning show last Wednesday to discuss his new health care initiative when Goldberg steered the conversation toward the bike lanes, complaining about how they've reduced the width of some streets.

"You screwed the city up," she said after the mayor explained these changes were part of Vision Zero.

Less than 2 percent of New York City streets have protected bike lanes, according to Transportation Alternatives.

"We were horrified to see last week that Whoopi Goldberg is really inappropriately using her public platform," member Amy Cohen told Metro after the protest. "She has an opportunity to really support the solutions that save lives. Instead, she went on the air condemning bike lanes and pedestrian islands and all the



Amy Cohen, left, holds a picture of her son Sammy Cohen Eckstein outside of the ABC building during Tuesday morning's protest. PROVIDED BY AMY COHEN

tools that are responsible for the fact that New York City has an all-time low for the number of people killed in traffic crashes."

Thanks to Vision Zero efforts, New York City traffic fatalities dropped in 2018 to the lowest numbers recorded since 1910.

Cohen has been involved with Families for Safe Streets since her son, Sammy Cohen Eckstein,

was hit and killed by a driver near their Park Slope home on Oct. 8, 2013. It's a group "no one should ever have to join," she said.

"We fight because we know all too well the price of not making change," she said. "My son, nearly 13 years old, was killed five years ago. His friends all left for college in the fall. They're all starting their lives without him."

Goldberg did apologize for her comments via Twitter over the weekend and touched on the subject again on Tuesday. On-air, she mentioned street barriers that go up and down "that we could put [in] and people could get access to where they need to go in the event of an emergency or a holiday."

"I guess people thought I was saying that bike lanes were bad. I was not. I was saying I think we could do a better job [of] putting them in the city and keeping everybody safe — the bikers, the drivers, everybody," she said on-air. "So I'm very sorry if folks didn't know that that's what I was talking about."

To these activists, her comments still aren't enough.

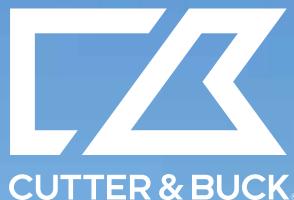
"A true apology would not have been, 'I am so sorry for your loss but I still don't like these

things,'" Cohen said, referring to Goldberg's tweets. "It would be, 'I'm sorry, I read up more about it and you're right, I didn't know the facts.' Like most people, they don't know the facts until it happens to them."

**"I guess people thought I was saying that bike lanes were bad. I was not."**

Whoopi Goldberg

On Tuesday morning, protesters held signs and handed out flyers urging people to call ABC and ask that they have Families for Safe Streets as guests on "The View." The group also sent a letter to Goldberg asking for the chance to appear on-air to spark a national conversation about preventing traffic deaths.



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# Senate votes to expand NY abortion rights

After years of opposition by New York Republicans, the Reproductive Health Act has been passed by the State Senate.



WILL DRICKEY  
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After the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court and the nomination of William Barr for attorney general, the Trump administration has taken a clear stance on the subject of abortion rights — against. Seeing an existential threat to the protections guaranteed by the Roe v. Wade case of 1973, the New York State Senate passed the Reproductive Health Act, guaranteeing women's rights to bodily autonomy within state lines.

"We thought at that time, that because it was so fundamentally right



Gov. Cuomo announced with former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton his intention to codify Roe v. Wade protections in New York just a few weeks ago. GETTY IMAGES

for women to have autonomy over their body, we thought that it was a barrier we would never have to face again," said State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins at a press conference. "Whenever you have something that momentous, there's always someone who wants to go back to the way things were. So, brick by brick, they

began to rebuild that barrier. ... They were looking for a moment to overturn this decision that changed our lives."

The new law states that comprehensive reproductive health care is a fundamental right, and more specifically that people in New York have the right to seek an abortion within 24 weeks of the start of their pregnan-

cy, or at any time if the pregnancy is not viable or a risk to the mother's health.

"As attacks on reproductive rights grow around the country, emboldened by the Trump administration's efforts to stack the courts against women, updating New York's abortion law to protect the rights guaranteed by Roe v. Wade is

more critical than ever," said New York Civil Liberties Union Executive Director Donna Lieberman.

The law also changes the previous penal code to make the definition of homicide now exclude the abortion of a fetus older than 24 weeks.

"Person," when referring to the victim of a homicide, means a human being who has been born and is alive," the amended law reads.

While Justice Kavanaugh has previously stated that Roe v. Wade is settled and "important precedent," CNN has reported that he has expressed willingness to uphold laws that severely restrict abortion rights by creating de facto barriers to the process.

"We have led the way on women's rights like no other state," Gov. Andrew Cuomo declared at a press conference with Hillary Clinton earlier this month. "Period."

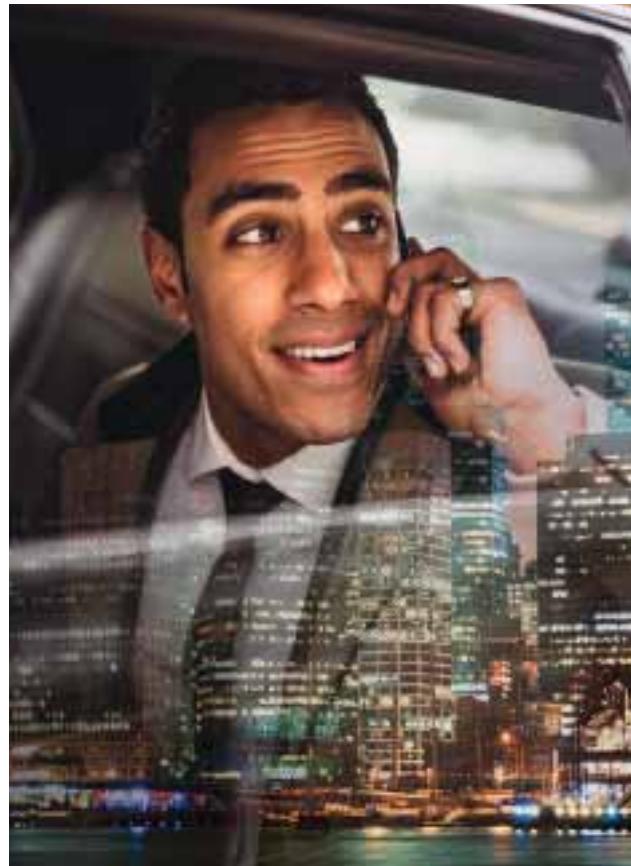
New York already has a law on the books protect-

ing abortion rights, but it was passed in 1970 and has not been updated since, and was not as expansive as those protected by Roe v. Wade three years later. Notably, as Stewart-Cousins pointed out, 12 Republicans voted in favor of the 1970 bill, but State Senate Republicans have blocked the updated bill since 2006.

The new law will go into effect the moment it is signed by Cuomo.

In the same Senate session, State Democrats also passed the Comprehensive Contraception Coverage Act, which requires insurance companies to cover contraceptives and voluntary sterilization procedures, and the "Boss Bill," which prohibits workplace discrimination for reproductive health choices.

"We're saying that here in New York, women's health matters," said Stewart-Cousins. "We're saying that here in New York, women's decisions matter."



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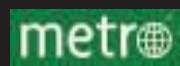
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# Chris Brown denies rape allegation in Paris

Singer Chris Brown said on Tuesday that a rape allegation against him was false, a day after the French prosecutor's office said that he had been arrested in Paris with two other suspects.

Brown, who is a U.S. citizen, had been released from police custody as authorities were still investigating the case, the French prosecutor's office added.

The arrests were first reported by Closer magazine, which said Brown, his bodyguard and a friend were detained after a 24-year-old woman alleged she was raped at the singer's suite at the Mandarin Oriental hotel on the night of Jan. 15.

The woman said she had met the men at a Paris nightclub earlier in the evening, according to the magazine.

"I wanna make it perfectly clear. ... This is false," Brown said in



Chris Brown during his court appearance. GETTY IMAGES

a post on his Instagram account. "For my daughter and my family, this is so disrespectful and is against my character and morals."

**"I wanna make it perfectly clear. ... This is false."**  
Chris Brown

Brown, 29, pleaded guilty to assault

ing Rihanna, then his girlfriend, in 2009, an incident that made headlines around the world when a photo of her bruised face was released.

In 2016, he was arrested in Los Angeles after a woman said he had pointed a gun at her. Brown denied any wrongdoing.

A rape conviction in France can carry a sentence of 15 years. REUTERS

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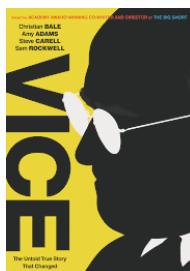
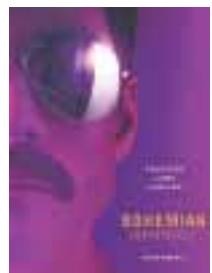
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# 2019 Oscar nominations



On Tuesday, Jan. 22, the nominees for the 91st Academy Awards were announced at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater in Beverly Hills, California. Alfonso Cuarón's 1970s-set drama "Roma" and "The Favourite," a period comedy starring Olivia Colman, will go head-to-head at the Oscars ceremony on Feb. 24 with 10 nominations each. Metro highlights the nominees competing for Hollywood's top prizes this year.

## BEST ANIMATED FEATURE

- "Incredibles 2," Brad Bird
- "Isle of Dogs," Wes Anderson
- "Mirai," Mamoru Hosoda
- "Ralph Breaks the Internet," Rich Moore, Phil Johnston
- "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse," Bob Persichetti, Peter Ramsey, Rodney Rothman

## BEST PICTURE

- "BlacKkKlansman"
- "Black Panther"
- "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- "The Favourite"
- "Green Book"
- "Roma"
- "A Star Is Born"
- "Vice"

## BEST FILM EDITING

- "BlacKkKlansman," Barry Alexander Brown
- "Bohemian Rhapsody," John Ottman
- "The Favourite," Yorgos Mavropsaridis
- "Green Book," Patrick J. Don Vito
- "Vice," Hank Corwin

## BEST ACTOR

- Christian Bale, "Vice"
- Bradley Cooper, "A Star Is Born"
- Willem Dafoe, "At Eternity's Gate"
- Rami Malek, "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- Viggo Mortensen, "Green Book"

## BEST ACTRESS

- Yalitza Aparicio, "Roma"
- Glenn Close, "The Wife"
- Olivia Colman, "The Favourite"
- Lady Gaga, "A Star Is Born"
- Melissa McCarthy, "Can You Ever Forgive Me?"

## BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

- Amy Adams, "Vice"
- Marina de Tavira, "Roma"
- Regina King, "If Beale Street Could Talk"
- Emma Stone, "The Favourite"
- Rachel Weisz, "The Favourite"

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**BEST DIRECTOR**

- Alfonso Cuarón, "Roma"
- Spike Lee, "BlacKkKlansman"
- Adam McKay, "Vice"
- Paweł Pawlikowski, "Cold War"
- Yorgos Lanthimos, "The Favourite"

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY**

- "Cold War"
- "The Favourite"
- "Never Look Away"
- "Roma"
- "A Star is Born"

**BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY**

- "The Favourite," Deborah Davis, Tony McNamara
- "First Reformed," Paul Schrader
- "Green Book," Nick Vallelonga, Brian Currie, Peter Farrelly
- "Roma," Alfonso Cuarón
- "Vice," Adam McKay

**BEST ORIGINAL SCORE**

- "Black Panther," Ludwig Goransson
- "BlacKkKlansman," Terence Blanchard
- "If Beale Street Could Talk," Nicholas Britell
- "Isle of Dogs," Alexandre Desplat
- "Mary Poppins Returns," Marc Shaiman

**BEST LIVE-ACTION SHORT**

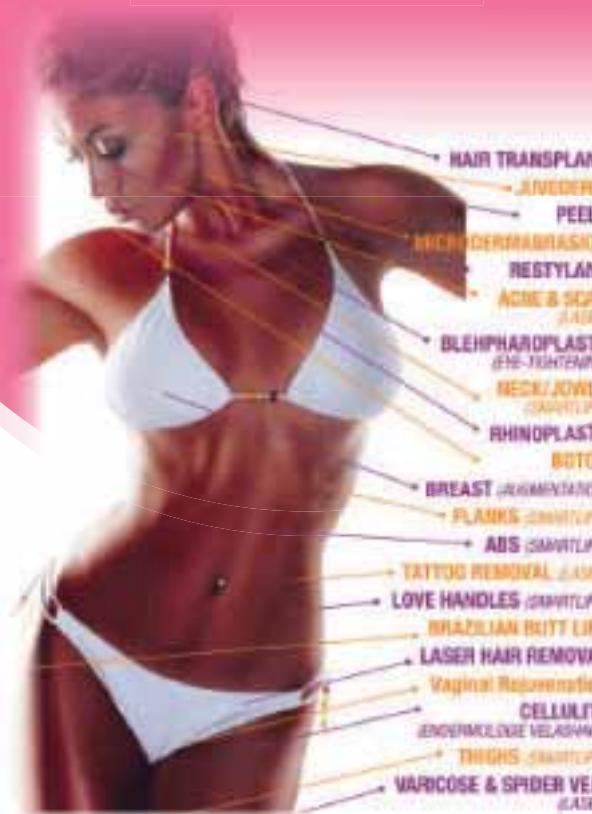
- "Detainment"
- "Fauve"
- "Marguerite"
- "Mother"
- "Skin"

**BEST ANIMATED SHORT**

- "Animal Behavior"
- "Bao"
- "Late Afternoon"
- "One Small Step"
- "Weekends"



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Pat King  
Grumble Editor

READER WRITE-INS:

SPITTING ON THE SIDEWALKS!

I am so tired of seeing people spitting on the streets and sidewalks. It is such a nasty habit which for some reason has picked up a life of its own. Some people don't even

look to see if someone is walking in their proximity before they do it. Please have some common decency for others and stop.

— Marsha, Metro Philly reader

SUPERMARKET EXPRESS LANE — NOT!

My Grumble is about the express (12 items or fewer) lane in supermarkets. Why do they almost always put the slowest, least competent, least-interested-

in-their-job-more-interested-in-what's-happening-past-their-checkout-station checkout people on the express lane? Some of the checkout operators on the express lane are so slow and disinterested, it is almost as quick to go to one of

the regular lanes and stand behind someone with a mountain of groceries to be checked out. A lot of the time the express lane is anything but express.

— Sylvia Orr, Metro New York reader

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## #metrohumble

SLIP-ON SHOES

Let's give it up for the unsung hero of all early-morning dog walks, slip-on shoes. When your little pooch needs to run out as quickly as possible, slip-on shoes save you so much hassle and time. If you didn't know, consider that my hot tip to all of the dog walkers out there.

— Joe Early, Metro New York reader



Please remember to send your Humbles to [humble@metro.us](mailto:humble@metro.us). These submissions can be acts of gratitude, positivity or kindness that you have seen throughout the day.

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**Aries** Get fired up and get things done. Don't let minor setbacks or negative people slow you down. Your accomplishments will encourage positive change.



**Taurus** You'll learn from someone with more experience if you network or attend a meeting or lecture. If you keep an open mind and listen carefully, it will lead to personal improvements.



**Gemini** Opportunities will arise through a connection you make while doing something physical. Refuse to let a jealous person use emotional tactics to lower your self-esteem.



**Cancer** Don't settle for less when you can have so much more. Look at the possibilities and try something new. A partnership should enhance your life, not limit what you can do.



**Leo** Mix business with pleasure to get ahead. Not everyone will favor what you propose, but those who do will offer enough support to help you reach your goal. Romance is highlighted.



**Virgo** Self-deception can be costly. Don't fall into a trap someone sets. Talk to an experienced colleague to discover the best way to deal with adversity and emotional blackmail.



**Libra** Pay more attention to yourself and your needs. A makeover or quality time spent with a loved one will help you deal with the responsibilities hanging over your head.



**Scorpio** Education will help you bring about the changes you want to make in your life. Don't procrastinate when you should be taking the initiative to make things happen.



**Sagittarius** Be open to trying new things, but don't be gullible if someone offers something unrealistic. Do your own research and depend on your resources to get things done properly.



**Capricorn** A steady pace forward will bring the best results. Don't be tempted by what others do or say. Follow what works best for you and keep moving ahead.



**Aquarius** A physical outlet will help temper an emotional situation. Concentrate on what needs to be done, and don't stop until you are satisfied with your progress.



**Pisces** Don't share your feelings. Someone will use what you tell them to make you look or feel bad. If you focus on what you can do for others, good karma will come your way. EUGENIA LAST

# The Powerful ( and little known) Back Pain Treatment Used By Smart New Yorkers Who Don't Want Back Surgery or Opioid Drugs

**NEW YORK CITY** - A major back pain relief opportunity is at hand. But if you are interested, you must act quickly.

**Here is why:** Back pain ruins lives... and puzzles doctors.

You go through so many exams and tests... and treatments... and only end up suffering and frustrated.

And everyone is quick to say they have the "new breakthrough solution."

Am I right?

Well, the fact of the matter is... treating back pain is difficult. But advances in modern medical science and technology have created a treatment that has gotten great results with countless back pain sufferers who had tried everything else. Many had given up hope.

**This treatment is called:**

"Radiofrequency Neurotomy." RF for short. And here's how it works...

RF is a procedure that is based on the theory that blocking the nerve supply to the painful area may alleviate pain and restore function.

There are many nerves around your back or neck and one of their jobs is to sense PAIN.

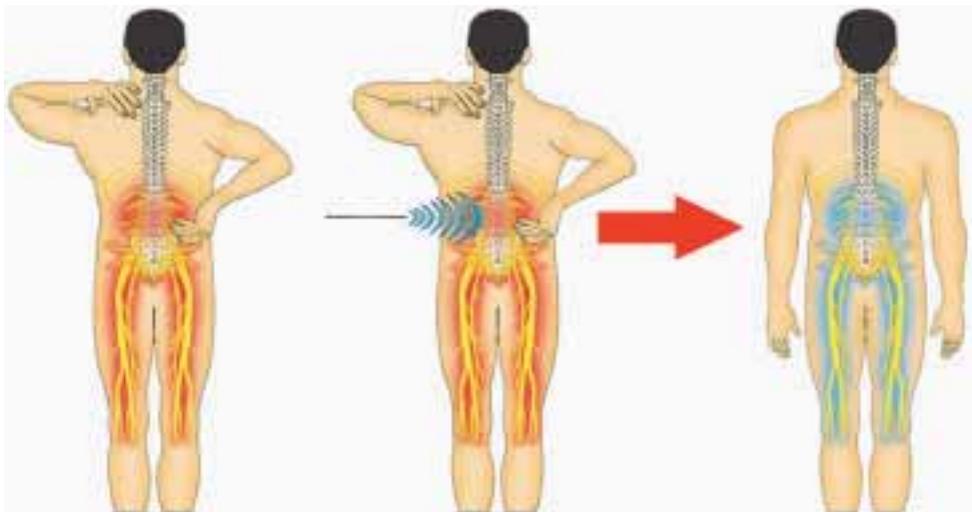
Radiofrequency waves delivered to these nerves under advanced precision medical imaging to target the damaged areas... done right in their own clinic without intimidating, expensive hospitals or surgical centers ... to "block" the painful nerve flow.

**Two steps in the formula are performed.** First, a test or diagnostic "Block" procedure is done to determine if the procedure is going to decrease pain and improve function. If this first "test" procedure is successful, RF Neurotomy or "Radiofrequency" will be performed for longer term relief.

NOT just the Treatment alone that's the key ingredient.

*You see, the real secret is the formula.* And that again starts with a proper screening evaluation to determine if you are a good candidate and may achieve the results you are looking forward to. This is always Step number one.

**And the best part about this screening is... It's FREE**



## FREE screening available for powerful back pain treatment

This screening will give you so much relief just knowing what is going on... and what your best options are.

That's right. *NYC Pain MD* offers this first step screening at no cost to patients. The only problem is... they often get over 100 inquiries a day as they also treat almost every painful area and joint. Sometimes it's hard to get through. If you don't get through to someone when you call... keep calling... or leave a message... it will be well worth it.

### But that's just the first step

After your free screening, if you qualify, the doctors will discuss the best treatment plan for you in a way that you will understand completely. Not all complex "doctor talk"...

This may be one... or a combination of the advanced medical treatments offered at *NYC Pain MD*.

Everything will be explained and all your questions will be answered. And even better:

You will be given all this At NO COST. *NYC Pain MD* doc's are not like used car salesman. They will not be giving you a sales pitch. They are doctors and will give you the best possible options to help your pain and offer to help you the best way they can. In fact, with up to 100 inquiries a day from patient's looking for relief, it's often hard to even get a treatment spot.

**You should also know this:** While *NYC Pain MD* cannot help everyone...

so many have gotten the pain relief they were looking for.

One of the reasons they offer those first step free screenings, is because it has opened the door to so many people to get help that they never would have otherwise.

At the very least, you will finally have some direction and a plan. And... whether you have the best, worst or no insurance at all, *NYC Pain MD* programs can be made affordable to everyone

They do not want insurance issues... or not being rich or famous... to keep you away if you are suffering in pain.

### How To Schedule Your Risk-Free No-Obligation Screening Evaluation

There is a whole lot more I could say about their treatments etc... but this space is limited and that's best left for you and the doctors to discuss in person.

So... if you are even remotely interested ... take the a first step and give them a call at **877-245-9252** and ask for your free screening.

One more thing... We often get over 100 calls in a single day. For that reason, if when you call you do not get a live scheduling coordinator, make sure to leave your name, number and time of your call on our voicemail. They will get back to you as soon as possible. Again, the number to call is **877-245-9252**. More info at: [painmdny.com/back-pain](http://painmdny.com/back-pain)

## LIFESTYLE

# Bringing the beer to the people

The Evil Twin Brewing NYC pop-up taproom inside Nowadys is your first chance to taste eight of their new beers, plus limited-edition brews coming in February. PROVIDED

You can finally taste Evil Twin Brewing's first New York-made beers, even though their Queens home isn't finished yet.

 **EVA KIS**  
eva.kis@metro.us

It's been two-and-a-half years since Evil Twin NYC broke ground on its brewery in Queens, and you can finally taste what they've been making — just not in their taproom. While that remains under construction, Evil Twin is opening a pop-up taproom inside Ridgewood bar Nowa-

days, pouring eight varieties starting Jan. 25.

"[Nowadys] is such a cool place, cool guys — it was just an obvious match," says Evil Twin founder Jeppe Jarnit-Bjergso. "It was just an obvious thing to reach out to them and say, 'Let's work together and make Ridgewood the next big thing.'"

The new indoor draft bar shows off a wide range of what will come out of Evil Twin Brewing NYC, from pilsners to IPAs and stouts. The brewery has made 13 styles of beer so far and continues to experiment — starting in February, the Nowadys taproom will also feature several

limited-run beers each week.

Jarnit-Bjergso says the brewing process has been "almost too easy" once



they finally got to start-up a month ago; full production capacity will be 26 beers at a time. Pop into the pop-up

taproom on Fridays 5-10 p.m., Saturdays noon-10 p.m. and Sundays noon-3 p.m., which will run until Evil Twin Brewing NYC finally opens.

## What to expect at Evil Twin NYC

The Evil Twin brewery was supposed to open at 1616 George St. in Ridgewood in Spring 2018, but coming up against local construction rules forced Jarnit-Bjergso to make some design changes along the way. The ambitious space used to be a concert hall, and will have not just a taproom but a coffee bar and a stage for live entertainment and other events.

The Queens brewery is the first permanent home for Evil Twin, marking the end of its days as a purely "gypsy brewer," which leases space from other breweries to make its beers. Jarnit-Bjergso and his wife have called the city home for six years and also own Greenpoint's beloved beer bar Tørt.

But even if you're familiar with Evil Twin's flavors, the beers made in Queens are different: new styles made on new equipment. Cans carry a "New York City" stamp on the Evil Twin logo, with a new style of artwork.

"The existing brand is worldwide; this is a lo-

cal brand," he says. "We only sell this in New York. We want to be part of the scene, give people something unique and a reason to come to Ridgewood."

Want to take the new brews home? You can also stop by the brewery now to get a sneak peek at what's to come and buy cans and merchandise — so you can say you knew them even before they were open.

Nowadys is located at 56-06 Cooper Ave. on the border of Ridgewood and Bushwick. We recommend sipping your Evil Twin brews inside their heated backyard yurt — and perhaps a session in their outdoor sauna.

## Cozy up to some fancy hot chocolate

Winter has properly arrived in New York, which thankfully means so has the Valrhona Hot Chocolate Festival to help thaw our frozen souls.

Back for its fourth year, from now through Feb. 3, the Valrhona Hot Chocolate Festival challenges some of the best bakeries in the city to craft beautiful, innovative and over-the-top hot chocolates using differ-

ent types of Valrhona chocolate.

At Epicerie Boulud, Executive Pastry Chef Jayce Baudry used Alpaco 66% chocolate sweetened with a touch of orange-infused maple syrup. Not doing dairy? Laduree's Passionement hot chocolate is made with coconut milk and passion fruit-infused Itakuha 55% cocoa.

**EVA KIS**



Epicerie Boulud's hot chocolate with orange-infused maple syrup. PROVIDED

## HERE'S THE FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2019 VALRHONA HOT CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

- Almondine (85 Water St., Brooklyn)
- Lafayette New York (380 Lafayette St.)
- Epicerie Boulud (1900 Broadway, 185 Greenwich St., 1 W. 59th St.)
- Patisserie Chanson (20 W. 23rd St.)
- Dominique Ansel Kitchen (137 Seventh Ave. S.)
- Laduree (398 W. Broadway, 864 Madison Ave.)
- Baked (279 Church St.; 359 Van Brunt St., Brooklyn)
- La Maison du Chocolat (30 Rockefeller Center)
- Gabriel Kreuther Handcrafted (41 W. 42nd St.)
- MarieBelle Gourmet Chocolates (484 Broome St.)
- Brooklyn Roasting Company (all locations)
- Levain Bakery (all locations)

Besides doing the good work of keeping us thawed, the event has a charitable purpose: Fifty cents of every cup sold is donated to Food Tank, a nonprofit that promotes environmentally, socially and economically sustainable ways of farming and alleviating poverty.



## A mind-altering conversation with the Lucas Brothers

We sat down with the twin comedy duo before the kickoff of their stand-up tour.



PAT KING  
patrick.king@metro.us

Twins Kenny and Keith Lucas, otherwise known as the hilarious comedy duo The Lucas Bros, have a lot on their minds these days. Their calm and dry delivery may fool some people at first, but the brothers are some of the most creative thinkers going in comedy. We caught up with Kenny and Keith ahead of their stand-up tour to talk about the legalization of drugs and the lasting effects on culture, plus some of the big movie projects they are working on.

**So you guys were studying at NYU Law School before starting in comedy. What made you choose such a 180-degree change in your lives?**

**Kenny:** I think it was a combination of that we were both sort of disillusioned with the law school process. I think we both had an inclination that we both wanted to do something else that was artistically inclined.

**Keith:** We were both very, very dissatisfied with the whole experience. We were both suffering from depression. We both picked up drinking problems. It got really bad. Law school is an incredibly stressful environment and I don't think we really understood what we were get-

ting ourselves into. Once we got there and realized it wasn't what we wanted to do, that's when Kenny started thinking about other alternatives for us to potentially explore. We'd always been fans of stand-up comedy in general, so stand-up sort of served as an outlet for us. So Kenny called me up, and we quit.

**In your last Netflix special, "Lucas Brothers: On Drugs," you talk a lot about your experiences with drugs. Do you feel as though drugs inform a lot of your creativity?**

**Keith:** I'm not saying because of drugs, our minds are freer. But I think a combination of marijuana, 'shrooms and philosophy has helped our minds become a little bit more nimble. In law school, there's a rigidity there. Because we studied philosophy, we sort of became freer thinkers and it was kind of tough to conform to that rigidity. By smoking marijuana and doing 'shrooms, it has allowed us to open our minds a little more and it certainly reflects on the comedy that we perform and the things that we write.

**Do you think legalization of weed will have an effect on pop culture as a whole?**

**Keith:** Obviously some of the mystery behind weed is the fact that it is illegal. It's seen as rebellious when you smoke weed. When it gets legalized and everyone starts to smoke, I think it will lose a little bit of its edge in terms of cultural rebellion. You're not gonna get Cheech and Chong

anymore. It's going to be ubiquitous and you're going to get people to claim about that it's healthy in many ways. I think we'll find other ways to be creative. I don't know if weed is a prerequisite for being your most creative. I just want people to stop getting locked up for smoking weed. I'll take that over the creative stimulus.

**You're also working on a script for your own feature film with Judd Apatow. How is that process coming along?**

**Kenny:** We have a concept in mind. We wrote a full script but now we're deconstructing that script, Judd's process is fascinating. He likes continuous rewrites. So, even if you have a full script you have to keep hammering away until it gets to where it needs to be to get shot. It's an incredible process learning filmmaking with one of the greats.

**Are you guys developing any other Lucas Brothers projects at the moment?**

**Kenny:** We're certainly toying with different ideas. We have some live-action ideas that we're developing. We have some animated ideas that we're developing. We're just trying to keep our hands in a little bit of everything. But for now, we're also developing our new hour. So yeah, we're just trying to stay busy, man. Working on as many different things as possible.

**The Lucas Brothers will be performing at the Bell House in Brooklyn Friday night.**



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# Heléne Yorke and Drew Tarver talk 'The Other Two'

The stars of Comedy Central's new series on the importance and silliness of sibling rivalries.



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Did you know that Justin Bieber has siblings? He does, but since they're the brother and sisters of one of the world's most popular pop singers, most people probably don't even know that they exist.

This is the general idea behind "The Other Two," a Comedy Central series from former "Saturday Night Live" co-head writers Chris Kelly and Sarah Schneider. Ahead of the show's premiere on Thursday, Metro spoke to stars Heléne Yorke and Drew Tarver about the series.

The conversation went many directions, but one of the more interesting had to do



Heléne Yorke and Drew Tarver open up about "The Other Two." COMEDY CENTRAL

with the pair's fictional younger brother Chase Dreams, who's played by Case Walker in the series. Most audiences will probably assume that Yorke and Tarver's characters, Brooke and Cary, don't actually like their younger brother Chase. Some might even

assume that they're jealous of his sudden stardom. These assumptions are refreshingly wrong.

"I think it's refreshing that that kind of resentment doesn't have a place in the show," says Yorke. "It is something that, when you hear this premise, you would

think that some obvious family high jinks are about to go down. Instead, our characters take it as an opportunity to inform their own growth, which has its own selfish aspects. You watch us go through that, as well as certain shades of resentment, animosity and jealousy. But they're never mean about it."

"This obviously comes from Chris and Sarah's writing on the show, which is fantastic," adds Tarver. "Brooke and Cary are probably very jealous of Chase, but they deal with it in a way that most people would in real life. Which is to say, they talk behind other people's

backs. You know it's bad, what you're feeling, but you also know that you should be better. Plus, it's our little brother and we're genuinely worried about him. We don't want this to ruin his life, but we also want it to improve ours."

Despite the fact that "The Other Two" could easily transition into the "high jinks" referenced by Yorke, her and Tarver's characters avoid these pitfalls. Sure, these characters are struggling in their own lives and struggling with the idea that their baby brother is now monumentally more famous and successful than they'll ever be, but they still love him. The premiere episode drives this point with a rather touching scene shared by the three siblings toward the very end.

It should come as no surprise to everyone who tunes in on Thursday that Yorke and Tarver have siblings of their own. Kelly and Schneider's writing on "The Other Two" definitely lends plenty of credence to the onscreen depiction of familial love, but the actors' performances pull just as much from their own lived experiences.

"I ended up doing a chemistry read with Drew and we immediately connected as siblings," Yorke explains. "The Other Two" premieres Thursday, Jan. 24, at 10:30 p.m. on Comedy Central.

"Both Drew and I come from big families. He has two sisters and I have two brothers. So I think connecting as siblings is something that we're both very well-versed in."

"It's because you hang out with your brothers a lot and I hang out with my sisters just as much," says Tarver. "I also have a younger brother who's quite younger than me. It actually helps me out a lot, whenever I'm thinking of Case's character Chase. He reminds me of my little brother a little bit, specifically how I want to take care of him. Plus, my little brother is definitely cooler than me. He drives a Tesla and is awesome. I think he bought that rocket launcher thing, too."

Tarver is quick to correct Yorke by properly identifying his real-life brother's purchase as one of the flamethrowers Elon Musk's Burning Company was selling last year.

"He's basically Elon Musk. My little brother is obsessed with him and wants to buy all of his things," Tarver laughs. "So he's definitely cooler than me. He's cooler than the both of us, just like Case is cooler than us and Chase is cooler than both of our characters."

"The Other Two" premieres Thursday, Jan. 24, at 10:30 p.m. on Comedy Central.

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# Tom Arnold talks 'Dead Ant' and, of course, Donald Trump

The sci-fi horror pits the comedian and a metal band against giant insects.



GREGORY WAKEMAN

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When you're talking to Tom Arnold, you're never far away from Trump being brought into the conversation.

The comedian even manages to bring a discussion regarding his latest movie "Dead Ant" back to the president of the United States. That is some feat considering that "Dead Ant" is an enjoyable, funny sci-fi romp that revolves around one hit wonder metal band Sonic Grave, which Arnold is the manager of, fighting for their lives against giant ants in the desert.

After signing up for "Dead Ant," Arnold went back and watched the sci-fi B-movies of the 1950s that inspired it, which, he was surprised to learn, were actually a lot better than he remembered.

"You know, with Trump as president, they hold up," he insists. "The



Tom Arnold opens up about his new sci-fi comedy. AUGUST HEART ENTERTAINMENT

presidents [in these movies] are so stupid. They want a space force. The vice president is exactly like Mike Pence. These are from 1955 and it's what's happening in America right now!"

Arnold was mostly attracted to "Dead Ant," though, because he knew exactly how to portray the "crabby" manager of Sonic Grave, whom he based on Shep Gordon, his long-time friend who still manages Alice Cooper, and make him hilarious.

Especially as the filming conditions for the in-

die film mirrored those of the band trapped and under siege from the enormous insects.

"It was definitely in my wheelhouse because the guy was so crabby, and, you know, he's in the tight

quarters of a Winnebago with these musicians. It was [actually] frustrating to shoot. The actors were wonderful. But I was like, 'Oh my God, these guys are driving me freaking nuts.' It was just like the

band and manager would be. So it was great and easy to play."

This brings Arnold back to Trump, as he then insists that Sonic Grave "would have played his inauguration" at the behest of his character.

"My character would have booked him in a heartbeat. They would have been playing for \$40. Or they would have played for free, so yeah, no doubt I think they would have been up there with Jon Voight. No doubt about it."

"Dead Ant" also sparked some nostalgia for Arnold, as its combination of humor, horror and just being an all round hoot took him back to his youth and his love of the drive-in movie experience.

"I grew up in a small town in Iowa with a drive-

in theater. And the way this movie opens, the director shot this amazing opening, and when I watched the gal on the highway and what happens ... man, that put me right back in Ottumwa, Iowa. You don't watch those movies to go, 'Oh that's impossible.' You've got to buy in. That's what's fun about these B movies."

"You know, people are like, 'I can't really believe in that movie.' You know what, 'F-k you!' This is what you buy. That's what made it so fun to play. So once I knew the ants were going to be big and scary then I was like, 'I'm all in and get the right guys in and get the right gals and let's have some fun!'"

"Dead Ant" is in select theaters, On Demand and Digital HD on Jan. 25.

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# What the government shutdown means for home loans

Here's what you need to know.



NerdWallet is a personal finance website.

The partial federal government shutdown is complicating the already complicated process of getting and managing a mortgage. For one thing, the political storm is like severe weather at a major airport: You can expect minor delays or worse. Also, it could mean financial hardship for some federal government employees facing mortgage payments without their regular paychecks.

Here's how the shutdown is affecting homebuyers and homeowners — and what you can do about it.

If you're getting an FHA, VA or USDA loan. If you're getting a Federal Housing Administration loan, it's likely you can expect delays in the underwriting process, and it's possible your closing date will be pushed back as well.

Single-family FHA loans are being funded, even during the shutdown. FHA home equity conversion mortgages (known as reverse mortgages) and FHA Title I loans (financing for permanent property improvements and renovations) are the exception — and won't be processed during the shutdown.

FHA spokespeople weren't available to provide an estimate of how many borrowers could have their loans delayed. But the most recent data suggest delays could potentially affect thousands of borrowers.

In January 2018, the FHA insured mortgages for 64,401 single-family homebuyers — of those, 82 percent were first-time

buyers.

The processing of VA loans, which are guaranteed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, will continue, according to the VA.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture isn't approving new USDA loans during the shutdown. According to USDA data, the department guaranteed or made about 10,000 single-family loans each month in the most recent fiscal year that ended in September.

If you're seeking a conventional loan. Most mortgages are considered conventional loans, meaning they aren't backed by the federal government. However, they are facilitated by government-sponsored enterprises, such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

As private companies, Fannie and Freddie aren't directly affected by the shutdown. Mortgage processing is continuing as usual, except in cases where the federal government provides information required for underwriting.

"The IRS has not been processing 4506-T tax transcripts — tax return verifications — which are required on most files, although that service is restarting," says Ted Rood, a senior loan officer in St. Louis. "There will still be a backlog due to requests that have been piling up since Dec. 22."

Self-employed borrowers are particularly affected by the lack of access to federal income tax transcripts. Some lenders may accept signed tax returns in lieu of transcripts.

And the shutdown could also stall verification of employment for government employees.

If you own a home but aren't getting paid. If the lack of a paycheck has you worried about paying an existing mortgage on time, contact your loan servicer immediately. Explain your situation and ask about alternatives. HOLDEN LEWIS



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# Yanks' Mo Rivera gets record-breaking Hall of Fame nod

The Baseball Hall of Fame announced Rivera, Mussina, Halladay and Martinez as the Class of 2019 on Tuesday.



JOE PANTORNO  
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New York Yankees legendary closer Mariano Rivera added another record to the books as he gained induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame with 100 percent of votes.

It is the highest induction rate in the history of the Hall of Fame, which announced its results on Tuesday evening, breaking Ken Griffey Jr.'s mark of 99.32 percent set back in 2016.

Rivera is joined by Seattle Mariners designated hitter Edgar Martinez, Toronto Blue Jays and Philadelphia Phillies ace Roy Halladay and his former teammate, starting pitcher Mike Mussina.

In order to receive Hall of Fame enshrinement, a player must receive at least 75 percent of the vote from the 425



Yankees great Mariano Rivera will be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame this summer.

GETTY IMAGES

members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America (BBWAA).

There was little doubt Rivera would be a first-ballot Hall of Famer as he is widely regarded as the greatest closer in the game's history.

The 13-time All-Star holds the major-league record with 652 saves and 952 games finished as he was an anchor of the Yankees dynasty that won four World Series in five years from 1996-2000 with another title in 2009.

Originally discovered in Panama as a starting pitcher, Rivera looked

like anything but a Hall of Famer after 10 inconsistent starts during his rookie season in 1995.

He was the set-up man for John Wetteland in 1996, where he played an integral part in delivering the Yankees their first World Series title since 1978. But after getting the closer's role in 1997 after letting Wetteland walk in free agency, he proceeded to blow three of his first six save opportunities.

Basically out of nothing — in which he deemed it "a gift from God" — Rivera found his devastating pitch, a cut-

ter that went on to baffle the majors for the next 17 years.

Rivera racked up 43 saves that year and went on to eclipse the 40-save mark eight more times. He led the majors three times in that category, including seasons of 50 and 53 saves in 2001 and 2003.

He was one of the most dominant postseason pitchers the game has ever seen, racking up 42 saves with a 0.70 ERA in 96 appearances, all of which are major-league playoff records. Along the way, he picked up the 1999 World Series

MVP and 2003 ALCS MVP awards.

He and Mussina were teammates for eight years on the Yankees after starting pitcher was signed as a free agent following 10 seasons with the Baltimore Orioles.

Despite Mussina having never won a World Series with the Yankees, joining a year after their 2000 win over the Mets and a year before their 2009 triumph over the Phillies, the righty nicknamed "Moose" racked up 123 of his 270 career wins in Pinstripes.

He won 15 or more games in five of his eight seasons in New York, including a sterling 20-9 mark with a 3.37 ERA during his final major-league season as a 38-year-old in 2008.

Since 1901, only Sandy Koufax, Win Mercer and Eddie Cicotte had a better WAR as a pitcher in their final MLB season than Mussina's mark of 5.1 that season.

Upon his enshrinement, which he received by just seven votes at 76.7 percent of the vote, Mussina will own the fourth-highest ERA among pitchers enshrined in the Hall of Fame, with a career mark of 3.68.

## Loggains slated to be next Jets offensive coordinator



Dowell Loggains. GETTY IMAGES

The New York Jets are on the verge of filling another major coaching void thanks to the Miami Dolphins.

NFL.com's Ian Rapoport reported on Tuesday that the Dolphins are allowing offensive coordinator Dowell Loggains to interview with other teams and they won't block him from leaving, either.

The Jets have been linked with hiring Loggains to the same position as soon as they hired Adam Gase, the former Dolphins head coach, as their leading man earlier this month. The two worked together in 2015 with the Chicago Bears when Gase was the offensive coordinator and Loggains the quarterbacks coach be-

fore a one-year stint last season in Miami, which yielded underwhelming results.

Dealing with yet another injury to starting quarterback Ryan Tannehill, the Dolphins offense was once again one of the worst units in the NFL.

After finishing 28th in points scored and 25th in total yards in

2017, Loggains didn't do much to help improve things as the Dolphins' offense ranked 26th and 31st in those same categories in 2018. Granted, Gase was the man calling the plays in Miami.

The distribution of power isn't expected to change as Gase will control the playbook on game days while Loggains will help de-

velop second-year quarterback Sam Darnold, who showed flashes of becoming a franchise quarterback during his rookie campaign last season.

Loggains does have some experience working with young, promising quarterbacks as he worked with then-rookie Mitchell Trubisky in 2017 while leading

the Bears' offense after Gase's departure. It wasn't a barnstorming start for the second-overall selection's career under Loggains as he completed just 59.4 percent of his passes for 2,193 yards, seven touchdowns and seven interceptions in 10 games.

While there were some creative differences between former Bears head coach John Fox and him, Jets fans will be hoping that Loggains won't see a repeat of those results with Darnold.

Loggains would be the third major coach hired by the Jets this month as they also brought in veteran defensive coordinator Gregg Williams last week.

JOE PANTORNO

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# Doctors Urge Knee Pain Sufferers “Don’t Get ANY Surgery Until You See This...”

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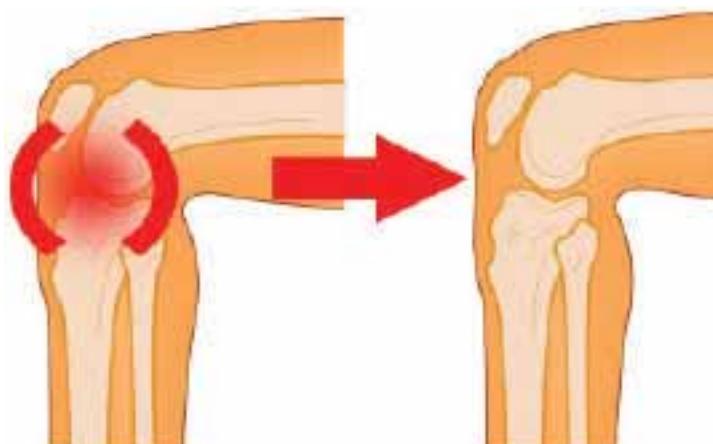
While I can't give you the entire treatment formula here (there is not enough space and WAY too complicated) I can give you the basics. And more important... I can tell you what it might be able to do for YOU.

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# Nets among biggest NBA surprises

Brooklyn has gone from basement dweller to Eastern Conference playoff contender.



JOE PANTORNO  
joseph.pantorno@metro.us

There must be something in the water over at the Barclays Center as the Brooklyn Nets have joined their temporary co-tenants, the NHL's New York Islanders, as one of the biggest surprises in sports this winter.

While the Islanders recently overtook first place in the Metropolitan Division, the Nets have completely turned their season around after all seemed lost back in November.

Shortly after the loss of promising young forward Caris LeVert due to a gruesome-looking leg injury that will remarkably not end his season, the



D'Angelo Russell (left) and Kenny Atkinson (right) are leading the Nets toward a bright future. GETTY IMAGES

Nets nosedived with eight straight losses to cap off a stretch that saw the team go 12 of 14.

By Dec. 5, the Nets were 8-18 and looked destined for yet another season at the very bottom of the NBA standings, especially with a roster that has seven players 25 years old or younger averaging 20 minutes or more. After all, this was a team that hadn't won over 28 games since the 2014-15 season.

Whether it was a culture change, a sudden injection of belief, or plain luck, something suddenly clicked for the Nets, who have suddenly become one of the NBA's hottest teams since that horrific November stretch.

Since that Dec. 5 loss to the Oklahoma City Thunder, the Nets have won 17 of their last 22 games, catapulting them from 12th place in the Eastern Conference to sixth.

Much of the credit

is owed to head coach Kenny Atkinson, who has taken a roster filled with castoffs and never-will-be's and quickly molded them into a postseason contender.

Having built a reputation as a point guard expert while coaching with the Houston Rockets, New York Knicks and Atlanta Hawks, Atkinson has helped bring out the best in D'Angelo Russell and Spencer Dinwiddie, a pair of afterthoughts who

are suddenly starring in Brooklyn.

Russell, who was shipped away by the Los Angeles Lakers after a failed two-year experiment, is living up to every expectation placed upon him when he was drafted second overall in the 2015 draft.

After averaging 14.6 points and 4.3 assists per game, Russell is garnering All-Star consideration with 19.2 points and 6.4 assists per game in 2018-19. Both figures are on pace to set career highs.

"I would say other coaches just looked at me as just a scorer," the 22-year-old told Stefan Bondy of the Daily News on Jan. 16. "Kenny kind of gave me the leash, the confidence to do what I do. It sounds so simple but just in general, I feel like I know what he wants out of me versus just playing in an organized pick-up game, and I'm trying to control it when there's no continuity to it."

Dinwiddie did not have nearly as-high expectations as the second-round pick of the Detroit Pistons back in 2014, yet he's become a vital piece of the Nets' backcourt. During his first four years in the league with the Pistons and Nets, the 25-year-old averaged 8.9 points and 4.5 assists per game, though he exhibited a noticeable ascension in play during his first campaign in Brooklyn last season.

Still, Dinwiddie is posting 17.0 points and 5.1 assists per game this year that is helping anchor the surprising Nets through the last leg of the so-called first half of the season.

While it's just a part of a Nets team that has featured the sweet shooting of Joe Harris and the defensive fortitude provided by Jarrett Allen, Russell and Dinwiddie are becoming the faces of a new movement in Brooklyn that is bringing basketball legitimacy back to the Big Apple.

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## GAMES

## metro.us/crossword

## ACROSS

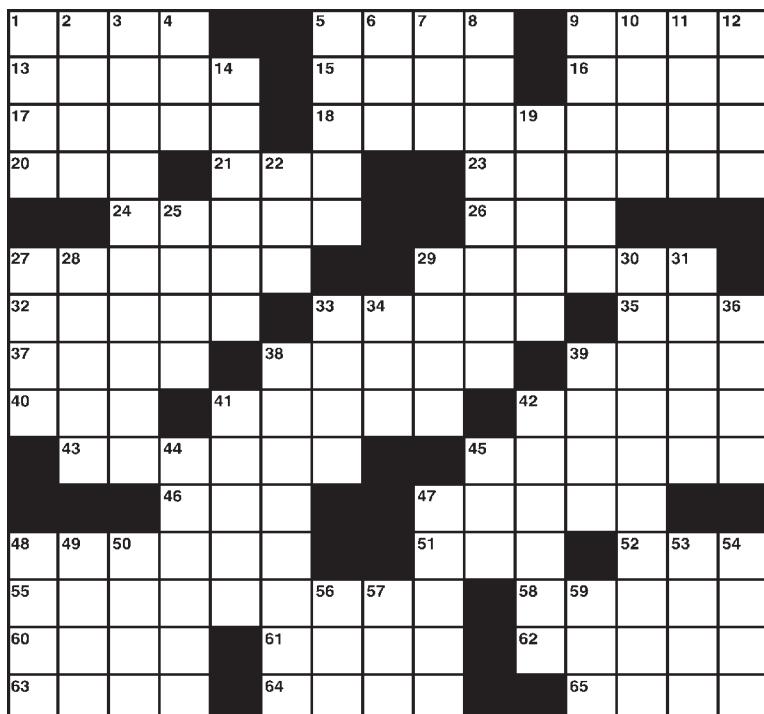
1 Unwanted e-mail  
 5 Smack  
 9 Slender  
 13 Friendlier  
 15 Lounge about  
 16 Donut's center  
 17 Mom's brother  
 18 Like terrible handwriting  
 20 " \_\_ whiz!"  
 21 Clean the floor  
 23 Take into custody  
 24 Donahue & Mickelson  
 26 "Ready, \_\_ go!"  
 27 Shrewd  
 29 Company  
 32 Packages of paper  
 33 Be a pack rat  
 35 Skirt's edge  
 37 Unruly crowds  
 38 Sudden forward rush  
 39 Actor Bridges  
 40 \_\_ Brynner  
 41 Shoe bottoms  
 42 Pub game

43 \_\_ soup  
 45 Most tender to the touch  
 46 Not at home  
 47 Reed or Fargo  
 48 Flat on one's back  
 51 Family card game  
 52 WWII president  
 55 Flat on one's face  
 58 Numerical comparison  
 60 Shrek, e.g.  
 61 British noble  
 62 Item in a bedding package  
 63 Golf shop purchase  
 64 Sunbeams  
 65 Painting & sculpturing

## DOWN

1 \_\_ as a bug in a rug  
 2 Forest tree  
 3 Good enough  
 4 Singer Tormé  
 5 Undergarments  
 6 Chat room laugh  
 7 Everyone  
 8 Delight  
 9 Jerseys  
 10 Part of the ear  
 11 Misfortunes

12 Bump into  
 14 Sends in payment  
 19 Avarice  
 22 Vaudevillian Olsen  
 25 Sings with lips closed  
 27 Military force  
 28 South Korea's capital  
 29 Chokes  
 30 From then on  
 31 Chairs & pews  
 33 Ship's frame  
 34 Afternoon hour  
 36 Has to  
 38 Slowpoke  
 39 Horse's home  
 41 Hinder the growth of  
 42 Generous ones  
 44 Sounds  
 45 Barron, to Melania  
 47 Sword fights  
 48 Espy; notice  
 49 Egg on  
 50 \_\_ over; study intently  
 53 Try to lose  
 54 Goes bad  
 56 Battery size  
 57 Attempt  
 59 Cry of discovery

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ArkadiumCheck your answers  
at metro.us/games

BY TCA

## metro.us/wordsearch



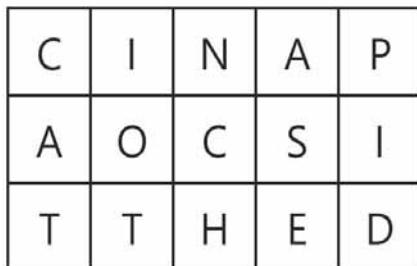
Apple  
 Cherry  
 Cream  
 Crust  
 Custard

Key lime  
 Lemon  
 Meringue  
 Peanut  
 Pecan

Pie  
 Pork  
 Pumpkin  
 Rhubarb  
 Sweet

## metro.us/wander

Category: Band



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## metro.us/sudoku

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## Yesterday's Answers

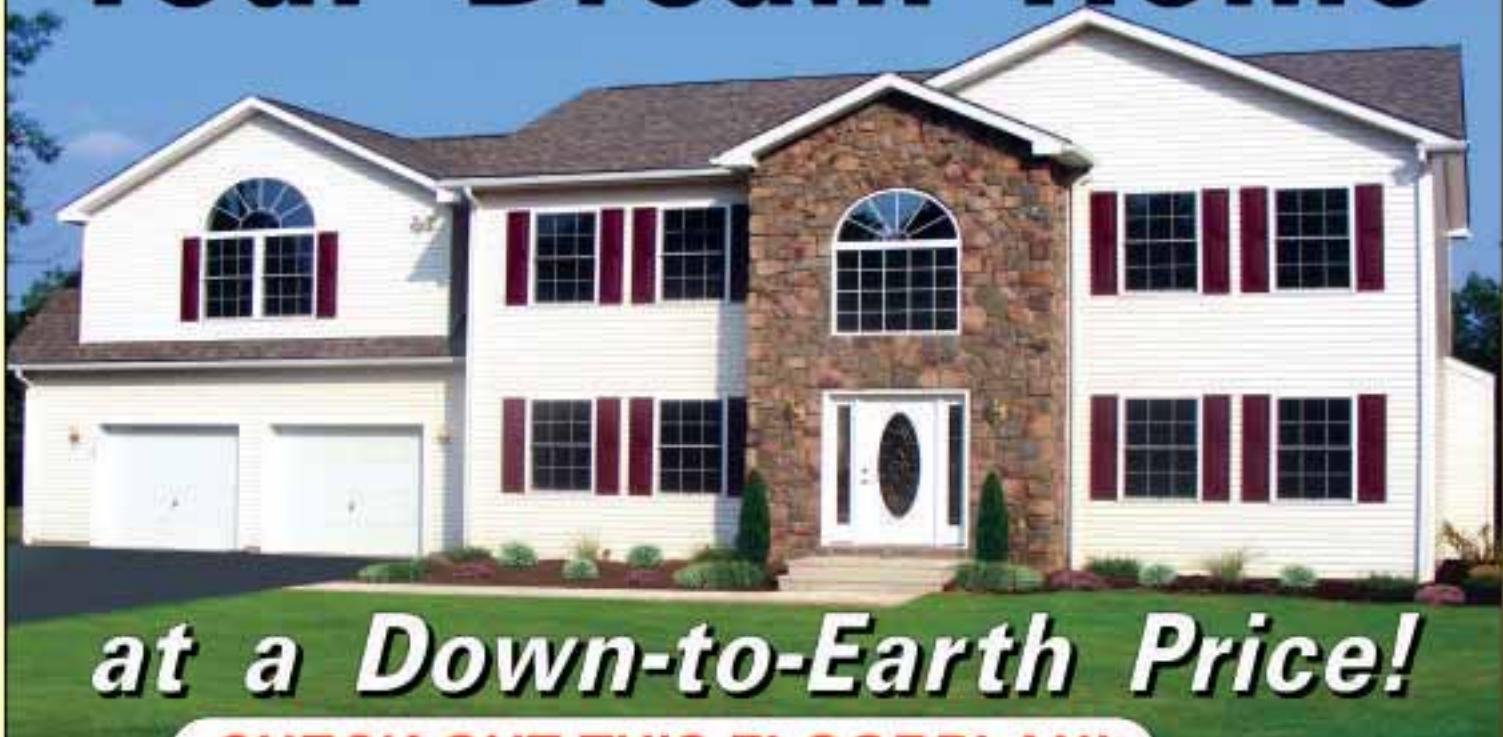


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